

NO MAN CAN STAND AGAINST...

THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU

CURTIS

02193
THE DEADLY
HANDS OF
KUNG FU
JULY, Nº 14
75¢



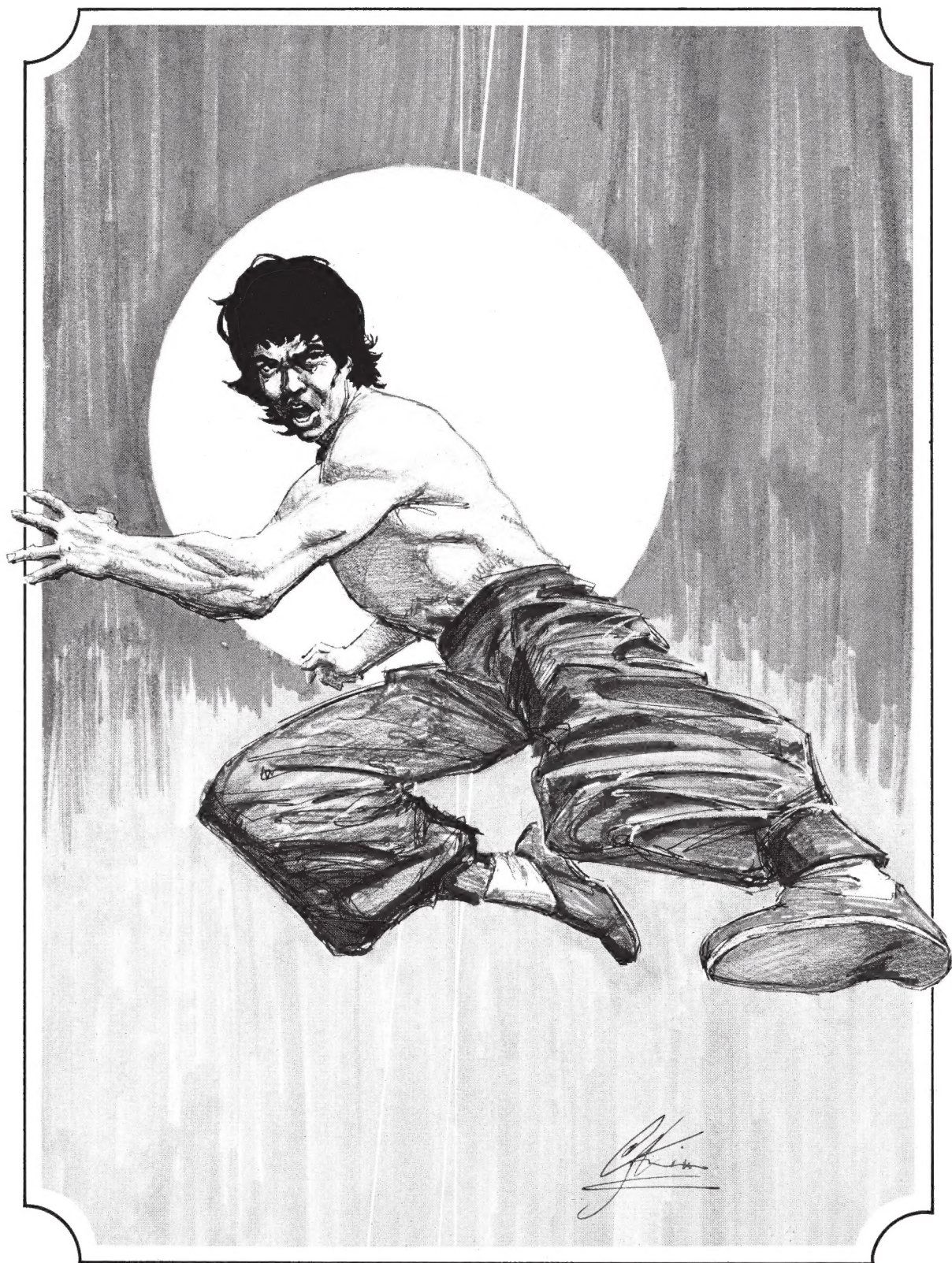
SPECIAL
ISSUE

BRUCE
LEE

THE
DRAGON
STILL
LIVES!



MARVEL



STAN LEE presents THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU™

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MASTER OF KUNG FU: THIEF IN GOLDEN SHADOWS

By Doug Moench & Rudy Nebres

The quest for the ancient Golden Dragon continues . . . but only if SHANG-CHI can escape from the perilous death-trap that closes in around him!

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By Thomas Sciacca

SONS OF THE TIGER: THE VALLEY OF ANCESTORS

By Bill Mantlo, George Perez & Dan Adkins

In a realm beyond our reality, Lin Sun faces the spectre of death on an ancient and terrifying battlefield.

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You know, a curious thing happened on the way to this letter column. The last three issues of THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU (that is, #s 9, 10 and 11) have all received a low volume of mail. Yet, conversely, our sales are still holding their own. Hmmm. We seem to be gaining a silent majority out there.

Maybe we've finally hit ultimate perfection with this mag, leaving constructive criticism pointless.

Come on—you don't believe that anymore than we do. A magazine ALWAYS needs good constructive criticism. So write and let us know what you think, pro and con! And, now, on to the letters on issue #11...

Dear Editors, Armadillos and other Aesthetes:

DEADLY HANDS #11 defies comment, but I'm going to take the dare.

I generally start at the bottom and work up; here, there's no bottom. For once, I was pleased with Moench's MoKF morality-play; it was true for the first time in ages to the Englehart-Starlin intelligent creation of yesteryear, read well, without Doug's usual quota of ten-dollar words. Vosburg, too, seemed better than usual: though the influences of Kubert, Adkins, etc. (and a new addition: page 12, panel 3 looked a bit like Dillin), the storytelling was better than ever. Abel's inks helped a lot.

Bill Mantlo and George Perez have made the Tiger's Sons real people with real drives, real obsessions, real neuroses (Stan's Spidey scripts taught me that word), in the face of a ludicrous, stereotypical story-seed. (By the way: was this ending the one Conway had originally, or did Mantlo cosmic it up?) With a little luck and a lot of care, the Tigers will rise and advance, with lives of their own. With the care of Bill and George, they have it made. (I hope I haven't slighted Tony's inks, as superb as ever.)

HANDS #11 is the best argument for text articles I've ever seen. Odd, but I preferred them to the comics, much as I like them. I must admit I've always had some trouble with BILLY JACK, like inability to decide exactly how I felt about the films at any given time. Apparently, I'm not the only one. Don McGregor, possibly the best technical writer in your corner (in fact, in the field), carried out his theme, the "selling" of a truth—and there are many—well. The ability to sell the inside of one's head is a frightening one. Billy Jack, or Laughlin, could do it; so could Hitler. And the world of happy-face buttons is not

one I'd choose; peace is a stronger thing than that. And the good guy wears an easily recognizable hat (albeit black). It ain't that simple. Don knows this. More, he lets us know. And most, he lets us think, without telling us what to think.

"Death as a LONER!" was the highlight of the issue to me, for presenting to me the work of a new creative talent. And talent is the word: rather than stick with a safe format, Scott Edelman opted for a more bizarre, more personal style in "Loner", and made it work. The fact that I could rank Scott's and Don's articles equally as the best part of DHoKF #11 should be taken as a highest compliment. Scott is a fine, individualistic ... DAMN GOOD reviewer. I hope to see more of his work in the future.

WOW, what more can you ask for? (Answer: More Edelman, more McGregor, more Iron Fist, more McLaughlin, more "Under the Pagoda" ...)

Now THIS is a comic mag!

R. KLORESE, or the Super-Skrull (can't trust anyone these days)

2739 East 65th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11234

Thanks, Rog, from everybody involved. Hopefully those "mores" you requested will be popping up in the near future. Actually, as originally planned, Don would have had one of his meandering masterpieces in this very issue. But, at the last moment, Jumbo John Verporten snatched him and refused to give him back until the dauntless one got caught up on KILLRAVEN and THE BLACK PANTHER. Still, we think we have a great turnout for the articles section this go-round, eh?

Funny you should mention "Under the Pagoda". That poor miniseries went awry from the beginning and just never quite worked out. If and when we decide what to do with the concept, we might bring it back, but not before!

Dear Editor,

I generally do not like stories that take leave of reality as easily as Bill Mantlo's SONS OF THE TIGER does, but he did tell his story with skill, flair actually, and communicated a sense of knowing what he's getting at that palliated his casual dismissal of reality for metaphysics. I have no idea what he plans to do with the three next, but I'm sure I'll be there anxious to find out.

The art is unusual for SONS OF THE TIGER. It says Perez and DeZuniga, but it looks like pure Perez. What I have not liked about DeZuniga's inking to date has been the way everything looks like DeZuniga. Happily this first pairing, of these two men has brought out the best in both.

Skimming through the Shang-Chi story convinced me that there was nothing worth reading in it. An re-enactment of Kent State in 1975? My God, that's crazy. Kent State happened at a certain time and place that is wholly alien to this present. And Moench kills off another woman. Perhaps we ought to start some sort of Moench Deathwatch. Deluge him with sympathy cards until he realizes that this casual killing of characters does not make his story "with it" or "relevant" or "more mature". Moench is wallowing in the same death-fetish that is pervading and stifling the 70's and his art would be far better off when he overcomes this fascination of his.

Mike Vosburg and Jack Abel combine to form an exceptional black and white art-team, though perhaps not for Shang-Chi.

Welcome aboard, Archie. I hope you decide to make this job a little more permanent than your last.

Brian Earl Brown
55521 Elder Road
Mishawaka, Indiana 46544

Dear Ron,

Deadly Hands #11 has to be your most consistent issue to date. Everything but MASTER OF KUNG FU was brilliant. Usually I skim over your text features but the comprehensive study of the Billy Jack movies really had me interested.

Although I didn't agree with all said, after



READERS' FORUM

Dear Marvel:

I am writing in response to those racial attitudes implicit throughout your martial arts series. You deserve a congratulatory pat-on-the-back for allowing Lin Sun to have muscles and intelligence and still be full blooded Asian. What offends me is your stereotypic treatment of Lotus, which typifies an Asian woman as either exotic and trecherous while aiding the enemy with her body or exotic and submissive while falling in love with a Caucasian hero. The paradox of this story is that Lin Sun and Lotus have not been attracted to each other in the slightest. You have given an Asian man the power equal to that of Caucasian heroes but have rendered him a eunuch. At the same time, you have portrayed Asian women as exclusively attracted to Caucasian male heroes. The message implied is. Asian women fall for Caucasian heroes, because Caucasian heroes are more masculine than Asian ones. What would be ideal would be a strong portrayal of a normal Asian woman who is emotionally stable enough to resist the charisma of Caucasian males (it can be done, you know) long enough to discover that Lin Sun, or any Asian hero, is around and is not a eunuch, contrary to popular myth. Careful Marvel, your colors are showing ...

Constance Hayashi
c/o Student Mail Room
Antioch College
Yellow Spring, Ohio 45387

You've raised an important—and perhaps delicate—issue. We don't think any of Marvel's writers feel that Caucasian male (or female) has any sort of special "charisma" over women (or men) of other races. Frankly, we feel at Mavel that there is a strong respect for all people in general. Perhaps we are guilty of identifying the most strongly with the viewpoint most familiar to us. Maybe, in that way, our "color" is showing. Still, it is something we all try to watch and, hopefully, keep in check.

We showed your letter to Bill Mantlo, to allow him to answer individually about SONS OF THE TIGER. Bill replied: "If you can hang on until DEADLY HANDS #17 & 18, I think you'll see a surprising turnabout in those very attitudes you find objectionable. For now all I'll say is that I'm AWARE of the problem and am attempting to deal with it in my own way. I will look forward to your comments on those issues."

Hopefully we have begun to answer your criticisms to your satisfaction. Ultimately, the only real answer can come in future issues of our magazines.

'Nuff said ... for now!

reading "Death is a Loner" and "Verdict" I felt that I understood a very emotional film a little better. THE TRAIL OF BILLY JACK upset some people, I know, because they weren't used to their beliefs being challenged so violently and effectively.

George Perez looked much better with De Zuniga inking and Bill Mantlo's story is slowly developing into a classic, but the best news of the issue was that Archie Goodwin will now be editing Marvel books. Archie is well known to me as the best black and white editor ever, and also as one of the best writers in the business. Thank you for re-establishing the faith.

Paul Skäär
1018½ Ruff
Ames, Iowa 50010

You mean we lost it somewhere along the line?

Whatever that last line meant, we're glad to have you aboard, Paul. And, frankly, the good stuff is just beginning. We've got so many surprises and special features lined up for the near future that we're not even sure where to begin. But you'll be seeing some and hearing about others in the next few issues, so hang in there with us for just a bit.

If you think the faith's ablazin' now ...

Dear Mike and Jack,

What does the sign on the back of Shang Chi, tunic stand for.

Garry Milburn
Tall Timer, MD 20690

A simple, direct and to the point letter.

Fair enough.

It is probably the most important symbol in Chinese philosophy, referred to as Yin and Yang.

the symbol blue and white.

Hope that answers your question, Gar!

My Dear Friends,

I have a few gripes I would like to voice at this time, if I may. Gripe #1. I read your magazine as often as possible. I read it mostly for the fight scenes, but I notice the heroes never (or hardly ever) use weapons. The way I understand it, weapons were an important part of advanced training. While fighting with the hands takes skill, to effectively use a weapon along with the hands and feet together requires a great deal more. I would enjoy seeing a story where the hero uses a weapon such as a sword, staff, spear, knife. I also would like to see less of the nunchaku. It was this kind of publicity that made it illegal in some states (also because of its easier production).

Gripe #2. I was sorry to see Iron Fist to go. He had quite a lot of potential. When you bring him back, try to refrain from naming the techniques he uses, because this ruins it. Names vary from style to style and schools. I have trained for two and one half years and yet to find two schools or styles that used the same name for the same move.

Gripe #3. Everybody's fighting. In my few short years, I've found that basic kick and punches worked the best. If a person is fighting a group of people (as often they are) a single strike will have to work. Only once have I seen this done in a mag. This was when Iron Fist was fighting some of the Steel Serpent's henchmen, he fought to stop them.

That takes care of my gripes for now. Keep 'em coming.

Yours in the Martial Arts

Mike Brooks

Box 591

Whiteman AFB, MO 65305

Keep what coming?? Our magazines or your gripes? That last department is all yours, fella!

(Hey, Hey! We're only kidding! Really! Honest!)

Getting back on the track, we think you'll find your first two gripes already taken care of. One gander at the SONS OF THE TIGER yarn in this very issue should warm your weapons-lovin' little heart. Also, besides returning to the pages of THIS magazine in the very near future, IRON FIST has just been awarded his very own color comic, scripted by Cheerful Chris Claremont and penciled by Punching Pat Broderick.

As for the fighting, okay, we admit it. For the most part you are right. It's a license we take to make the fights more visual ... the same license the films take for the same reason. Okay? Okay!

READERS' POLL

All of which brings us down to the Readers Poll. So, without wasting a single moment more, we'll just grab a peek and see that:

1) In first place came GLADIATORS IN THE CRYPT OF TOMORROW featuring the titanic Tiger's Sons, as produced by BILL MANTLO, GEORGE PEREZ and TONY DeZUNIGA ...

2) ... followed, in a surprisingly close second place by DEATH AS A LONER by SCOTT EDELMAN and VERDICT ON THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK by DON McGregor. You heard it right—the two articles of the issue flat-out tied each other.

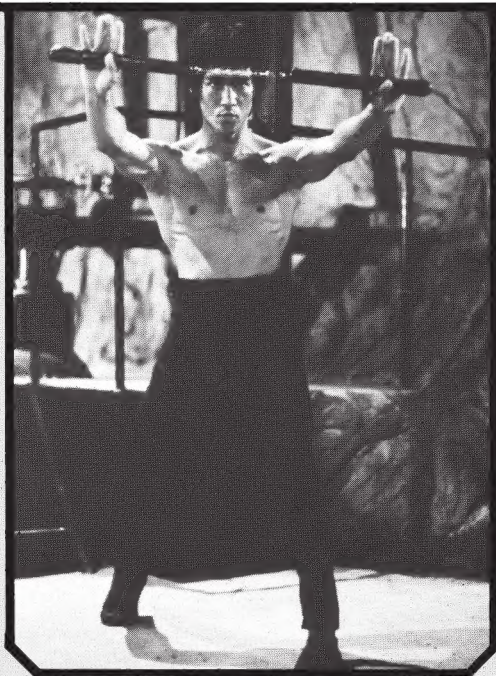
3) Finally, at the bottom of the totem pole is Shang-Chi in A DIFFERENT LESSON IN BLOOD UNCHANGED by DOUG MOENCH, MIKE VOSBURG and JACK ABEL. Oh well, you can't win them all. Then again, if more of you out there had written ...

... which reminds us we just have room enough to let you in on the address that you can send those mountains of mail that we've just intimidated you into writing to:

DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU
Marvel Magazine Group
575 Madison Ave.
New York, NY 10022

EDITORIAL

THE DRAGON STILL LIVES



By the time you are reading this, it will be nearly two years since Bruce Lee's death.

Making my usual trek to the office this morning, I wouldn't have thought so. The newsstands I pass all have one-shot Bruce Lee "special editions" and "photo albums" practically leaping off the racks at you. Flipping through a martial arts magazine, I'm hit by ads hyping Bruce Lee books, T-shirts, and even a record featuring a ballad about him. Down in the subway, it's impossible to see inside most arcade shops because their windows are plastered with Bruce Lee posters and movie stills. And, of course, the moment I'm in the office, I begin writing an editorial for our *own* Bruce Lee special issue.

Obviously, the Dragon still lives. Business is too good for him to be dead.

When we first began discussing doing this issue, the main article was going to be called "The Ripping Off of Bruce Lee." It seemed a subject overdue for coverage, and there was even opportunity for an appealing bit of irony in having that for a cover blurb alongside a picture of Bruce Lee. You see, Bruce Lee on the cover sells magazines.

Somewhere along the line, we never quite got around to doing it. Maybe it was just a little too cynical; a little too wise ass. Certainly, the

fine cover portrait artist Neal Adams turned in seemed to demand something a bit classier in the way of accompanying copy, and the articles by Tom Sciacca and James Glen—look at martial arts weapons employed by Lee, and a study of the philosophies behind his 'Way of the Intercepting Fist'—hardly seemed to fall under the 'rip off' banner. Then, when writer Wan Chang O'Shaugnessy called to say he'd just received a pre-publication copy of Linda Lee's biography of her husband, and wanted to use it in contrast with the exploitation aspects typified by the "The Dragon Dies Hard" flick, it became clear that the time had come to forget the ripping off of Bruce Lee as the main thrust of our issue. There were still some positive things to be covered.

I think it's better that way.

Yes, Bruce Lee is good business. Any phenomenon is. And if ever a person fit the phenomenon category, it's Lee. At a moment when it was desperately needed, he gave the world a captivating image, a unique and magic hero. Death took that hero away before his time. The need still exists. After two years and several tons of articles and motion picture publicity hand-outs which speculate on whether Merwyn Feldspar—or some other stalwart—is 'the new Bruce Lee,' it's blatantly obvious that there *won't* be a 'new

Bruce Lee.' Superb martial artists and interesting fighting stars, perhaps. But no one who'll bring an audience to its feet cheering with a sudden, virtuoso display of skill with the *nunchakus* or by explosively decking an opponent with a somersaulting back-flip that leaves you swearing it must have been trick photography but knowing from the staging that it *couldn't* have been. Someone might duplicate the feats, but the style, the intensity, that fore-shadow the eruption of action belong only to Bruce Lee.

So, the need, the interest, still exists. While it does, Lee will be good business. Which means exploitation and rip offs. But that only reflects on those who do the exploiting. It doesn't make the interest any less legitimate. It doesn't mean that there isn't also room for greater examination, fresher illumination, on the man, his image, and his legend.

Hopefully, more than just crying rip off as originally intended, this issue does some of that. Hopefully, in the future as new and varied material becomes available to us, we'll be able to do more of it, and do it better. Hopefully, we can serve your interest without exploiting it. Because, despite the hype, the rip offs, the business-as-usual, within that interest is the true reason why...

...the Dragon still lives.

Archie Goodwin, editor

SHANG-CHI MASTER OF KUNG FU

THE NIGHT THUS FAR:

"THE THEATER, LOCATED AT THE HEART OF MANHATTAN'S CHINA-TOWN, HAD PROMISED AN EVENING'S SPECTACLE OF MAGIC..."

"...BUT THAT SPECTACLE DISRUPTED IN VIOLENCE, AS ARMED MEN ATTACKED THE MAGICIAN CHO LEE AND HIS SISTER, SHAREEN..."

THESE MEN WERE SENT BY SHADOW-THIEF-- TO STEAL THE GOLDEN DRAGON; YOU MUST GO TO THE BUS TERMINAL, SHAREEN-- AND GET THE DRAGON BEFORE IT IS LOST!

VERY WELL, MY BROTHER... IF SHANG-CHI WILL ACCOMPANY ME AS PROTECTION AGAINST SHADOW-THIEF'S INEVITABLE ATTACK!

"I LEARNED FROM SHAREEN THAT THE GOLDEN DRAGON WAS A STATUETTE OF GREAT BEAUTY AND GREATER VALUE... IT'S WEALTH SCULPTED ENTIRELY FROM SOLID GOLD. SAVE FOR THE HEART--A RUBY IN THE SIZE OF A MAN'S FIST."



"BUT SINCE SHAREEN AND CHO LEE PRORESSED INTEREST ONLY IN THE DRAGON'S VALUE AS A REVERED FAMILY TREASURE, I AGREED TO DEFEND THEIR POSSESSION OF THE STATUE..."

"...AND CAME TO BATTLE SHADOW-THIEF OVER WHAT PROVED TO BE A MERE IMITATION OF THE GOLDEN DRAGON."

"...THE MAGICIAN, CHO LEE-- SLAIN BY HE WHOM HE HAD IMPERSONATED. IT WAS THEN THAT SHAREEN ADMITTED SHE HAD LIED TO ME-- THAT SHE WAS NOT CHO LEE'S SISTER..."

"...AND WHEN THE REAL SHADOW-THIEF STOLE THE REAL DRAGON FROM SHAREEN'S HOTEL ROOM, WE FOLLOWED HIS ESCAPING HELICOPTER INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE OF CONNECTICUT..."

"I HAVE LEFT SHAREEN BEHIND IN HER CAR. AND NOW INSIDE THE MANSION, I HEAR A VOICE FROM ABOVE, AND TURN TO FACE SHADOW-THIEF..."

WELCOME, SHANG-CHI!

I BELIEVE YOU ARE LOOKING FOR THIS...

"...THAT SHE WAS IN TRUTH AN AGENT OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT, DISPATCHED TO RECOVER THE GOLDEN DRAGON UPON DISCOVERY OF ITS THEFT FROM A PEKING MUSEUM. AGAIN, I AGREED TO AID HER..."

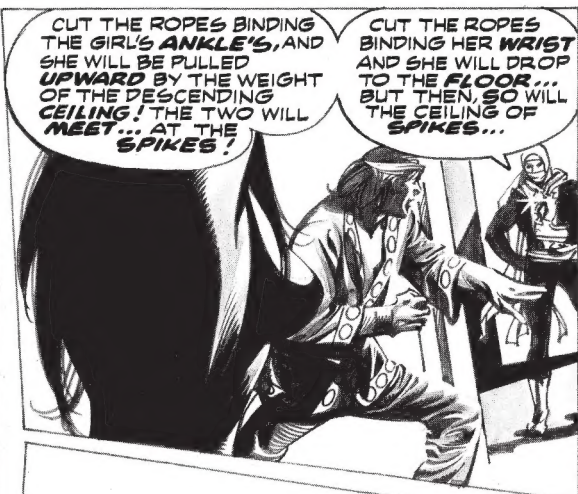
"...WHERE PURSUIT ENDED AT A LARGE STRUCTURE STYLED IN THE FASHION OF A MANSION BUT GUARDED AS THOUGH A FORTRESS."

"MY OPPONENT, TOO, WAS REVEALED AS BUT AN IMITATION; WHEN WE DISCOVERED THE REAL IDENTITY BEHIND HIS MASK..."





INGENIOUS.
IS IT NOT,
SHANG-CHI...?



CUT THE ROPES BINDING
THE GIRL'S ANKLE'S, AND
SHE WILL BE PULLED
UPWARD BY THE WEIGHT
OF THE DESCENDING
CEILING! THE TWO WILL
MEET... AT THE
SPIKES!

CUT THE ROPES
BINDING HER WRIST
AND SHE WILL DROP
TO THE FLOOR...
BUT THEN, SO WILL
THE CEILING OF
SPIKES...



THUS, SHE IS THE
THREAD BINDING
HER OWN LIFE! IF
SHE IS TO LIVE, SHE
MUST REMAIN
WHERE SHE IS!
AND IF YOU ARE TO
"RESCUE" HER...
SHE MUST DIE!

BUT TO MAKE
THE SITUATION
MORE FAIR...



... YOU MUST
HAVE SOME
ASSISTANCE!

THEY ENJOY
CLIMBING ROPES,
YOU KNOW...



"THEN, AS THE
COBRAS WRITHE
CLOSER..."

"... SHADOW-
THIEF
DEPARTS."



"BUT THE CLICK OF THE
DOOR'S LOCK UNITES
WITH THE SOFT HISS OF
THAT SERPENT WHICH IS
MORE EAGER THAN THE
OTHERS... AND WHICH IS
THE FIRST TO REACH
THE CENTER OF THE
ROOM..."

"I TURN FROM LOCKED
DOOR TO WEAVING COBRA,
FALLING INTO A CROUCH TO
FACE THE MORE IMMEDIATE
CONCERN. ITS HOOD
FLARES OUTWARD AS
ITS HEAD FLOWS UP AND
BACK, GRACEFUL DEATH
PREPARING TO STRIKE..."

"THEN, AS THE COBRA
LEAVES THE FLOOR
WITH A SNAP OF
LIGHTNING--

"-- I LUNGE TO THE SIDE,
HURLING MY FREE HAND INTO
A SWEEPING ARC...

"... WHICH **GRASPS** THE
SERPENT'S **TAIL**--AFTER
ITS VENOMOUS FANGS HAVE
PASSED BEYOND ME.

"NOW HE **TWISTS**
AND **COILS** IN MY
GRASP, SEEKING
TO REACH THE
HAND WHICH
IMPRISONS HIM...

"... AS HIS
BROTHERS
ATTAIN THEIR
OWN STRIKING
RANGE...

"THUS, BEFORE
THAT RANGE IS
CLOSED, I
MUST FORCE
THE SERPENT
TO **RELEASE**
ITS COILS...

"... THAT I
MAY EMPLOY
ITS **FULL**
LENGTH, NOW
STRETCHED
OUT IN
THE MANNER
OF A **WHIP**,
LASHING IN
A **CIRCLE** TO
STRIKE AT
THE **BLUR**
OF FANGS
WHICH
SURROUNDS
ME.

"THEY HAVE BEEN
REPELLED, BUT FOR
NO MORE THAN A
MOMENT. NOW I MUST--

WMMMPH

"WAIT-- A MUFFLED
SOUND OF **PANIC**...



"ONE OF THE COBRAS HAS FOUND MORE HELPLESS PREY IN SHAREEN'S BOUND FLESH..."

"...SNAPPING FORWARD, TWINING ONE SERPENT AROUND THE OTHER..."

"I MUST MOVE, THEN, IN THE INSTANT BEFORE IT STRIKES..."

"...AND JERKING BOTH AWAY FROM SHAREEN'S HELPLESS FLESH."

"BUT THE OTHERS HAVE RECOVERED, AND BEGIN TO CONVERGE ON ME FOR A SECOND TIME..."

"I MUST HAVE TIME TO FREE SHAREEN. THUS, IF ONE SERPENT HAD SHOWN A TASTE FOR HELPLESS PREY..."

"...THEN WILL NOT ALL OF THEM DISPLAY A SIMILAR PREFERENCE...?"

"...SO I MAY CONCENTRATE FULLY ON THE LEAP WHICH WILL REMOVE ME FROM THE SNAKES' PATH..."

"I CAST THE TWO BLEEDING VIPERS ASIDE... THEN MAKE SURE THE SHURIKEN IS STILL IN MY SASH WHERE I INSERTED IT AS THIS DUEL BEGAN..."

"THAT PATH LEADS TO A SINGLE DESTINATION AS EXPECTED."



"GOOD. THE FLOOR HAS ALMOST CLEARED BELOW ME..."

"...AND NOW, WHILE THEY ARE OCCUPIED WITH THEIR WOUNDED BROTHERS, I HAVE FOUND THE TIME I NEED..."



"... BUT AS I MOVE QUICKLY TOWARD THE LOCKED DOOR, HELPLESSLY WATCHING EYES FILL WITH FEAR AND SHATTERED HOPE..."

"I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU, SHAREEN!"

"I DROP TO THE FLOOR"



"I HAVE SUCCEEDED. THE UPPER SECTION REMAINS IN A SINGLE PIECE."



"LIONEL-- WHAT'S WRONG--?"

"I DON'T KNOW..."



"... BUT I HEARD A SOUND DOWNSTAIRS..."



"... AND I'M SURF AS HELL GONNA FIND OUT WHO MADE IT!"

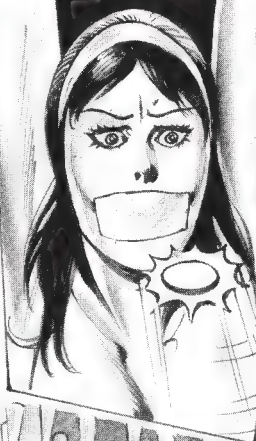
"I BREATHE DEEPLY, SLOWING MY HEART, ALLOWING ITS STRENGTH TO FLOW OUTWARD AND TO FILL MY LIMBS. THE TASK WILL REQUIRE FAULTLESS PRECISION IN TIMING... POWER AND FLUIDITY OF MOVEMENT..."



"I WILL NOT LIVE TO LEARN FROM THE SLIGHTEST MISTAKE. I MUST BE READY, AND ONCE READY, I MUST NOT STOP..."

"BOTH SHAREEN AND THE FALSE CEILING ARE FREE. BOTH FALL."

"NOW..."



"I SPRINT FORWARD--"

--LEAPING OVER SHAREEN'S SPRAWLED FORM--



-- TO GREET THE SPIKES WITH CRASHING KICKS AND CHOPS.



"MY FORCE IS SUFFICIENT! THEY BREAK WITH HARSH AND BRITTLE SOUND..."



"... BUT BEFORE THE OTHERS REACH THE FLOOR, I MUST TWIST MY BODY DRIVING MY PALMS UP TO THE CLEARED SECTION..."



"... SO THAT ONCE MY FEET HIT AND BRACE AGAINST THE FLOOR--"

"... I MAY HALT THE FALSE CEILING'S PLUNGE."



"BUT IT IS NOT YET FINISHED..."

SHAREEN
... YOU MUST PULL THE SECTION OF DOOR TOWARD ME...

"THE CEILING'S WEIGHT EXCEEDS THE STRENGTH IN MY ARMS. I CANNOT SUSTAIN IT MUCH LONGER..."

WHAT THE HELL DO I PAY THOSE GOONS FOR IF THEY CAN'T KEEP ANYONE OUT OF HERE...?!

"SHE HAS DONE IT."

"NOW I MUST INCH MY FOOT UNDER IT, AND PULL FORWARD WITH MY LEG..."

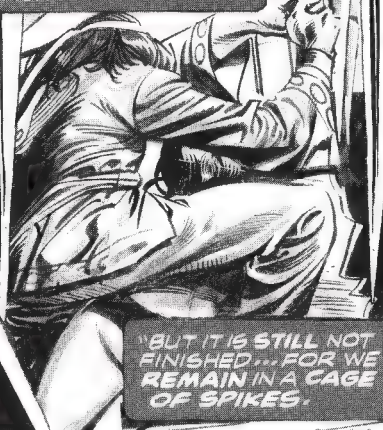


"... UNTIL I CAN LEVER THE DOOR HIGHER UPON MY KNEE..."

...THEN GRASP...



...AND WEDGE IT UNDER THE CEILING'S SECOND DOWNWARD LURCH.



BUT IT IS STILL NOT FINISHED... FOR WE REMAIN IN A CAGE OF SPIKES.

OH, THANK GOD, SHANG-CHI--/ I... I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT YOU JUST DID....!



BUT THANK GOD YOU DID IT! I... I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO--



WE CANNOT REACH THE DOORWAY THROUGH THESE SPIKES! UNTIE THE ROPES BINDING YOUR ANKLES WHILE I--



...CREATE A NEW EXIT ABOVE US!

NOW WHAT IN HELL WAS THAT NOISE--?!

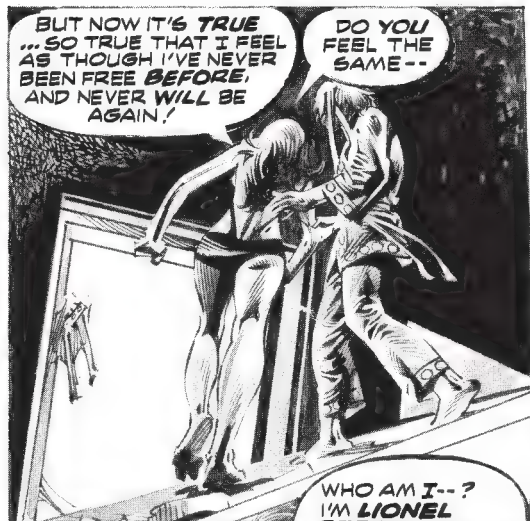


WHATEVER IT WAS... CAME FROM THIS DIRECTION...

"A THOUGHT COMES TO ME: HAS SHADOW THIEF LEFT THIS MANSION... OR DOES HE YET WAIT FOR US...?"

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE FREE AGAIN... SAFE AGAIN...





BUT NOW IT'S TRUE
...SO TRUE THAT I FEEL
AS THOUGH I'VE NEVER
BEEN FREE BEFORE,
AND NEVER WILL BE
AGAIN.

DO YOU
FEEL THE
SAME--



HOLD IT
RIGHT THERE,
SUCKERS!



WHO ARE
YOU?

WHO AM I--?
I'M **LIONEL
STERN**--THAT'S
WHO I AM! I
JUST HAPPEN
TO LIVE HERE--!

NOW WHO
IN HELL ARE
YOU--AND
WHAT IN
HELL ARE
YOU DOING
IN MY
HOME--?



AND WHILE
YOU'RE AT IT,
YOU CAN EXPLAIN
JUST WHAT THOSE
...THOSE SPIKES
ARE DOING IN MY
STORE-ROOM!!

YOU ARE NOT
...**AWARE**...
OF WHAT THAT
ROOM HAS
BECOME...?



LISTEN,
BUSTER--I'LL
ASK ALL THE
QUESTIONS
AROUND HERE!
I TOLD YOU
TO IDENTIFY
YOUR--

NOW WHAT'S
GOING ON...? SOUNDS
LIKE A **HELICOPTER**--
UP ON THE DAMNED
ROOF--! WHO
COULD'VE LANDED A
COPTER ON THE--

WHUP WHUP



CHWUD

"SHADOW-THIEF"





"SHADOW-THIEF SHOWS NO SURPRISE, UTTERS NOT A WORD, AS MY HAND FALLS ON HIS SHOULDER..."





"I TWIST TO DELIVER A SECOND BLOW, THIS TIME TO HIS FACE."

"IT IS ENOUGH. HE SPRAWLS BACK ONTO THE ROOF--"

WHOO!

"...AND REACHES FOR THE STATUE. IS HE SO STUNNED THAT HE BELIEVES HE MAY FLEE WITH IT...?"

"NO--! HE HURLS IT AWAY. BUT WHY, IF IT IS SO PRECIOUS TO HIM--?"

"NO ONE, AND THE STATUE HAS NEVER REACHED THE GROUND."

"IT HAS...DISAPPEARED."

"DOES SOMEONE WAIT BELOW TO CATCH IT...?"

"AND SHADOW-THIEF HIMSELF--! HE TOO HAS DISAPPEARED..."

"I LOOK UP TO THE RETURNING SOUND OF THE HELICOPTER..."

WHUP
WHUP
WHUP

WHUP

"HE HAS... DECEIVED MY MIND. THE GOLDEN DRAGON REFLECTS MOONLIGHT IN HIS HAND."

"THERE IS NOTHING I MAY DO, THEN, SAVE RE-ENTER THE MANSION, AND QUESTION THE MAN CALLED STERN ABOUT--"



--SHADOW-THIEF!



I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT! I NEVER EVEN HEARD OF NO SHADOW-THIEF!



THEN YOU DO NOT KNOW THAT HE WALKED FREELY THROUGH YOUR HOME, AND HAS JUST LEFT HERE WITH A STOLEN STATUE CALLED THE GOLDEN DRAGON...?

STOLEN...! BUT I PAID HIM TEN GRAND TO--



I MEAN, I...

YOU MEAN WHAT YOU SAID, STERN! YOU PAID THE NINJA TO OBTAIN THE STATUE FOR YOU... AND NOW HE HAS LEFT WITH BOTH YOUR MONEY AND THE STATUE!



HE HAS DECEIVED YOU!

BUT THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE--! IT'S IN MY DISPLAY ROOM! I KNOW IT IS...



I... I'LL SHOW YOU...

SEE? I TOLD YOU!

I KNEW IT WAS HERE --IT HAD TO BE...





Coming in
ISSUE #16:

PART IV

DEMONS IN PAINTED DEATH!

BRUCE LEE AGAIN...

By Wan Chang O'Shaugnessy

FOR BETTER AND WORSE

The Dragon, truly, dies hard. But the movie just dies. There is a superb film biography in the life of Bruce Lee—no question about it. The man was talented, innovative, intellectual, tormented, driven, sexy and tough as tungsten—a unique combination of Sammy Glick, Horatio Alger, Charlie Brown and your favorite superhero. He was the material of legends: he lived intensely, he died under mysterious circumstances, he was the idol of two separate cultures and he counted as admirers the rich, the famous, the powerful. Yeah, it should be possible to make a great Bruce Lee bio, and a truthful one; his activities are well documented. He granted interviews to virtually every reporter who asked politely, wrote revealing letters, diaries and poetry and, being hugely extroverted, could talk the night away to people who remember what he said. And he has already been the subject of two books, a journalist's investigation and a memoir by his wife. The latter, titled **BRUCE LEE: THE MAN ONLY I KNEW**, has just been published, and I'll have word on it in a bit.

For now, I'll merely lament that although a great film bio *could* be made from information available, it hasn't. Instead, greed-head maggots have produced an atrocity called **THE DRAGON DIES HARD** that is poorly produced, worse conceived, worst executed—the sort of outrage that makes garbage look good.

I sound angry. I am. It's hard not to be.

First, consider the advertising. Not precisely false—no overt lies in those newspaper displays. These slimies may be mendacious creeps, but they have competent lawyers. No lies; nor a scintilla of accuracy, either. "The Bruce

Lee Story," the headlines proclaimed. "How He Lived, How He Fought, How He Died." Uh huh. To me, that means a documentary, and the illos accompanying the ads did nothing to dispell this notion and, since all we Bruce Lee freaks know of footage from Lee's final, incomplete movie, **THE GAME OF DEATH**, and are lusting to view same, and it seemed logical that such footage would be included in a documentary, we slipped the box office ogre two-and-a-half and hurried into the theater. Non Lee freaks, I'm guessing, were vaguely aware of the Lee phenomenon and thought a movie would be the easiest way to get sufficient knowledge to chit-chat intelligently when Lee was mentioned at parties. For whatever reason, a lot of two-and-a-halves were slipped to a lot of ogres: according to the current *Variety*, the show-biz newspaper, **THE DRAGON DIES HARD** is a leading profit-maker.

Rip off city. An insult. A sewer. As Bette Midler would squeal, "The pits, darlings!"

They hired an actor... no, actor is too strong a term: they hired a face which bears a resemblance to Lee's and pointed a camera (a Brownie?) in the face's general direction, and told the face to do stuff, like move the lips and gaze at beaches and drive cars. Once, apparently, they instructed the face to kiss a woman—for me, the apex of the evening, and probably the high point for the face, too, because the woman was pretty. (She, poor dear, looked bored.) The rest is random pieces chopped from other movies with a power saw—not Bruce Lee productions, merely assorted kung fu flicks. I think I recognized hunks of **LIGHTNING SWORDS OF DEATH** and



If, as the title of the film states, **THE DRAGON DIES HARD**, the film itself doesn't make it any easier.



Lee presented us with the type of hero we hadn't seen in too long a time. When anger emblazoned on his face, it was OUR indignant rage directed at the forces of injustice around us. Seeing him, we all knew we could come out on top, if we only tried.

SHANGHAI KILLERS and I'm sure, alas, I recognized approximately fifteen minutes from KARATO, THE HONG KONG CAT—the credit sequence and the interminable and crushingly monotonous climactic fight. As his ultimate offense, the director spliced in a black-and-white still photo of Lee in his coffin, accompanied by pious Muzak on the soundtrack.

To me, this wasn't bad taste. Bad taste is forgivable and even occasionally fun; we've all enjoyed stinkers like THE GREEN SLIME and BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS and those horror fillers intended for drive-ins that Roger Corman used to shoot in a few days. Blessings on plain, unabashed bad taste. But THE DRAGON DIES HARD isn't merely bad taste, nor inept cinema, nor lousy entertainment. It is the equivalent of a mugging: it is not content to steal money; it also degrades and humiliates both audience and subject, mocking the memory of a man deserving of at least

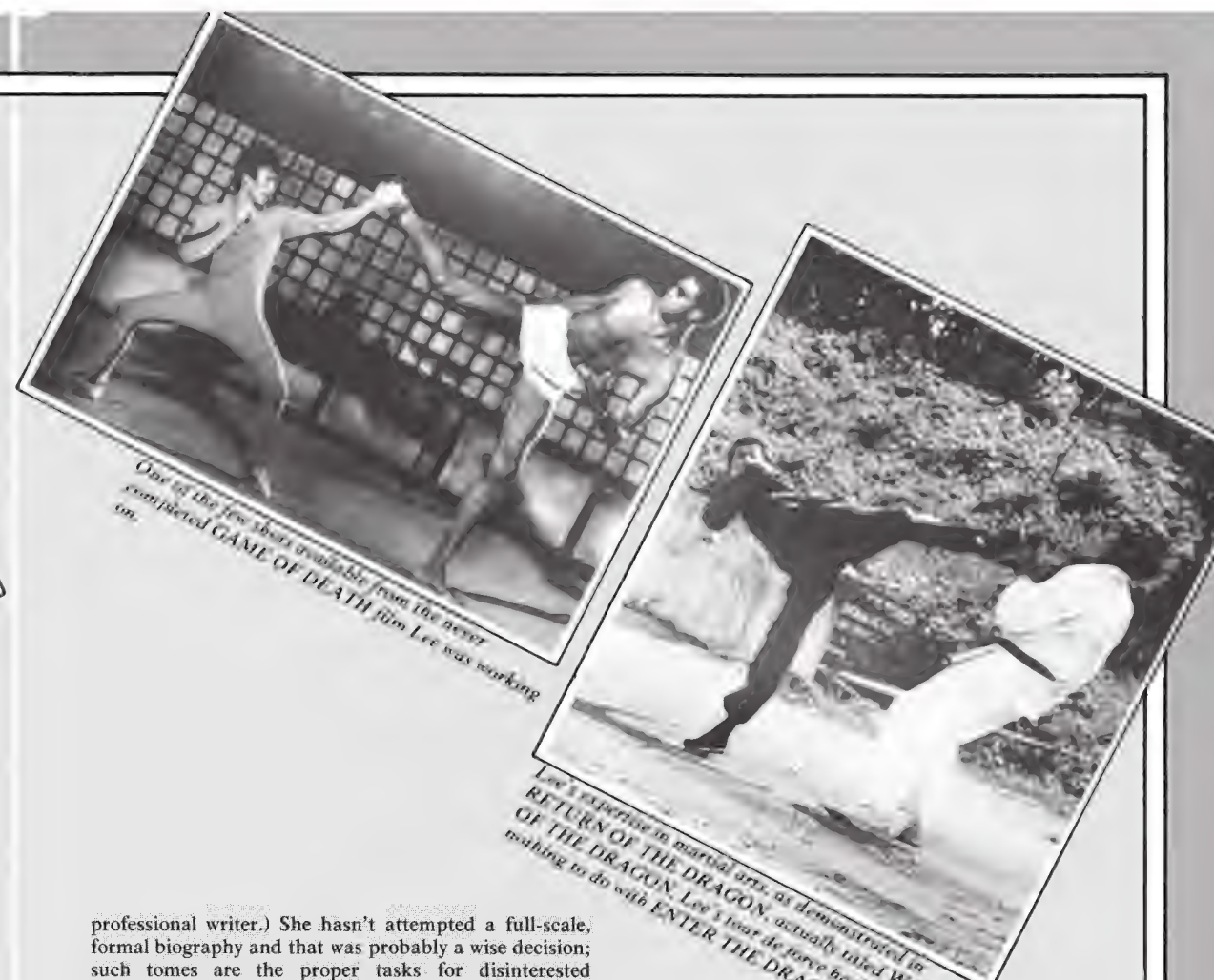
respect, if not unqualified admiration.

Somewhere, I hope, an honorable craftsman is preparing an honest screen treatment of the Bruce Lee story, a fitting memorial to him.

As for THE DRAGON DIES HARD, encase every existing print and the negative in concrete and sink the package in the deepest trench in the Pacific. Don't use fire; the air is already polluted.

Coincidentally, the same tag lines used to hype THE DRAGON DIES HARD—"How He Lived" and so forth—appear on the cover of an infinitely better project, Linda Lee's BRUCE LEE: THE MAN ONLY I KNEW, originally published in England and available in the United States as a Warner paperback, and a bargain at \$1.50. I prefer it to Alex Ben Block's THE LEGEND OF BRUCE LEE, and that is not stinting praise. Block did a good job: he took a six weeks' leave of absence from his job as arts editor of a Florida newspaper to interview Lee's friends and associates; to watch the movies and television episodes; and to investigate the martial arts in general and Lee's Jeet Kune Do in particular. He described his findings competently and enthusiastically, and the executives at Dell Publishing provided 16 pages of photos. The end result was quite nice.

But Mrs. Lee's book is nicer. You don't have to care for Bruce Lee or the martial arts to respond to what is essentially a wistful remembrance written by someone with a warm, personal style. (If Linda Lee didn't have help with her prose, she should consider a career as a



One of the few shots available from the never completed GAME OF DEATH film Lee was working on.

Lee's expertise in martial arts, as demonstrated in RETURN OF THE DRAGON, actually titled WAY OF THE DRAGON. Lee's hour de force having nothing to do with ENTER THE DRAGON.

professional writer.) She hasn't attempted a full-scale, formal biography and that was probably a wise decision; such tomes are the proper tasks for disinterested researchers. Rather, she has produced a carefully organized memoir, something like a Christmas letter to an old school chum.

I don't mean to imply the book is mushy, nor that it lacks facts. Everything is there: Lee's childhood acting in weepy melodramas, his adolescence as a punk street brawler, his migration to America, his years as a philosophy student in Denver, the founding of his Jeet Kune Do schools in Colorado and California, his struggles to establish himself as an actor in a Hollywood dominated by producers who considered Orientals either as yellow perils or buck-toothed, bowing menials, roles he refused to play. The discouragements, as when the part of Caine in television's "Kung Fu" was given to David Carradine because Lee was "too Chinese." And the triumphs here and in China, the vindications of his faith in himself: supporting parts in "Green Hornet" and "Longstreet" which wiped the nominal stars of those series off the tube, the brilliant portrayal of a vulnerable thug in MARLOWE, and the Hong Kong films which established him as the first Oriental superstar, CHINESE CONNECTION, FISTS OF FURY, RETURN OF THE DRAGON, and the American film many feel is certain to be a perennial in a class with GONE WITH THE WIND—ENTER THE DRAGON. But this bald data is colored with insights and images

that bring Lee alive: Images of him playing with his children, joking with studio crews, lamenting the discomforts of location shooting, gorging himself on the Chinese food he loved, carefully and compassionately instructing his pupils, assuring his wife of his fidelity.

Two aspects of Lee's personality, as recalled by Linda, surprised me: his scholarliness and his devotion to cinema as an art form. He was an avid bibliophile, collecting volumes on every subject from weapons to Greek philosophers. He translated ancient Chinese poetry and penned his own verse. And he was determined to elevate the mindless action films churned out by the Hong Kong movie industry into works equal to the best western movies. He was no fool: he recognized that his vehicles—FIST OF FURY, et al.—did not exactly compete with KING LEAR in complexity of plot, range of emotion or depth of characterization. Oh, they passed the test of popular culture; they provided what the customers paid for—ninety minutes of trained combatants wreaking



Bruce Lee adds a little fire to MARLOWE, an otherwise worthless film with James Garner doing an imitation of Roger Moore as James Bond.

Bruce Lee and John Sutton on the set of ENTER THE DRAGON.

spectacular damage on each other. Unlike *THE DRAGON DIES HARD*, they didn't cheat, these amusements. Yet Lee saw in them possibilities for genuine drama, multi-layered stories with the violence put to the service of a statement of the human condition. He had the instincts, and perhaps the talent, of a major artist: a special vision, always the prime requirement, plus an enormous capacity for detail and a bone-deep determination to get on celluloid what was in his mind. He expressed his feelings in this entry from his diary:

"An actor, a good actor that is, is an artist with depth and subtlety. Indeed, what the audience sees on the screen is the sum total of what that particular human being's level of understanding is."

Would Laurence Olivier disagree?

I realize many of you may not be enthralled by theories of drama, even Bruce Lee's theories. Well, not to worry, or save your \$1.50; you'll still enjoy the book, Mrs. Lee can come on like Rona Barrett, minus the simpering,

with gossip items about her husband's illustrious pupils, James Coburn and Steve McQueen. Ninety-eight pound weaklings will be fascinated by her telling how Lee transformed himself from a skinny kid into a nearly perfect physical specimen. And martial artists will be interested in Lee's training program and the ingenious devices he invented, including a punching bag that hits back.

Understandably, Mrs. Lee softens her husband's harsh edges and there, if anywhere, lies the book's faults. Bruce Lee was obsessed with success, and the obsessed are seldom champions of sweetness and light. He was gauche; he would remove his shirt in front of strangers to show off his muscles. He was intolerant: he sneered at the classical techniques of martial arts instruction. As he became famous, he grew vain: he was miffed when Coburn was given superior hotel accommodations during a jaunt to India. These character flaws Mrs. Lee either minimizes or dismisses as part of the creative temperament.

She also fails to answer the essential question concerning Lee, though she does ask it. She writes: "Had he been a man given to drink and dissipation; had he been killed, like James Dean, in a road accident—even then, I suppose, there would have been much speculation and theorizing. But that a man of Bruce's astonishing virility and vitality, energy and sheer physical fitness should suddenly blank out like a snuffed candle?—perhaps people cannot be blamed for speculating."



A fight scene from *FISTS OF FURY* (originally *THE BIG BOSS*). Bruce's first major Chinese martial arts film.

In *THE CHINESE CONNECTION* stands defensively next to Nora Mann, the actress who followed Lee thru his film career, a Lauren Bacall to his Humphrey Bogart.

They certainly can't. What *did* kill Bruce Lee? I've heard several rumors: he died from an excess of drugs (disproved by the autopsy); he was poisoned by martial arts rivals or gangsters or Hong Kong studio chiefs; or—and this is the kicker—he fell to the "vibrating palm." As recently as late February, on the Tom Snyder Show, a New York karate instructor named Aaron Banks told the cameras he is convinced someone had vibrating-palmed Lee. The vibrating palm, Banks explained, is a means of subtly upsetting an individual's metabolism by sending a jolt of energy into his body via a light punch or a comradely slap on the back. Although there are no immediate, visible effects, the internal workings are increasingly disrupted until, unexpectedly—finish. The perfect murder. The murderer can be thousands of miles away at the instant of death. This theory is somehow pleasing; it appeals to our sense of tragedy. We think of Hamlet and the lethal sword point, Achilles and his fatal weakness. But, as Banks rather sheepishly admitted, the vibrating palm is an unknown quantity; no proof exists that it ever did in *anybody*, much less Bruce Lee. (I've read, somewhere, that it is a hoax perpetrated by a group of martial artists looking for a really *bad* rep.)

In any case, Mrs. Lee is content to repeat the official verdict: death by misadventure. Specifically, the coroner's jury concluded that Lee died from hypersensitivity to either meprobamate or common aspirin, ingredients in a headache tablet Lee had taken earlier in the day. Mrs. Lee reports: "However unusual this might

be—and cases were rare—this was the only feasible solution."

But a *maddening* solution. As with President Kennedy's assassination, we hunger to *know*—the whys, the whos, the precise details. And, very probably, we won't—ever. To think about Bruce Lee is like reading a novel with the last chapter ripped away; an exercise in frustration. Bruce Lee overdosed on *aspirin*? No. It won't do. There *has* to be a larger, a grander answer.

There isn't. Instead, there is cheapo exploitation—*THE DRAGON DIES HARD*—and Block's respectful reportage and Linda Lee's affectionate memories. Oh, and the films. They aren't everything Lee wanted them to be, and they aren't the films he *would* have created—the masterworks boiling within him—but they are the best record we have of this original, extraordinary man, and maybe that's enough.

EDITORS NOTE: Just as this issue was going to press, we learned that Robert Clouse, the man responsible for *ENTER THE DRAGON*, was about to film a legitimate biography of Bruce Lee. It is a project that promises both quality and integrity. I immediately contacted Mr. Clouse who, with mere days before shooting was to begin in Hong Kong, generously offered his time for an interview, which will be published in one of the next few issues. Maybe now we can forget *THE DRAGON DIES HARD*—thanks to Robert Clouse, we no longer have to live with it!



THE ART AND NON-SCIENCE

A rapid-fire kick/punch combination is followed by a high pitched yell, and the blur of a body in flight as the latest opponent of the screen's "new Errol Flynn" is downed. In the darkened theatre, a roar of approval rises and one can sense that it is not just for the heroics of the current screen story, but rather for the strange aura of the *real* that projects from the hero himself, Bruce Lee.

Vicariously, all those in the seats have just lived the most exciting moments of their lives, and unlike with the Errol Flynn of old, this cinema superhero does not use several stunt doubles to give him his air of the super—he truly can perform the amazing deeds the audience sees on the screen. How? Why? That is what this article is about.

Question: what do you call a system that can take an ordinary man, and from him create a finely honed machine for combat, a practitioner of the art of violence?

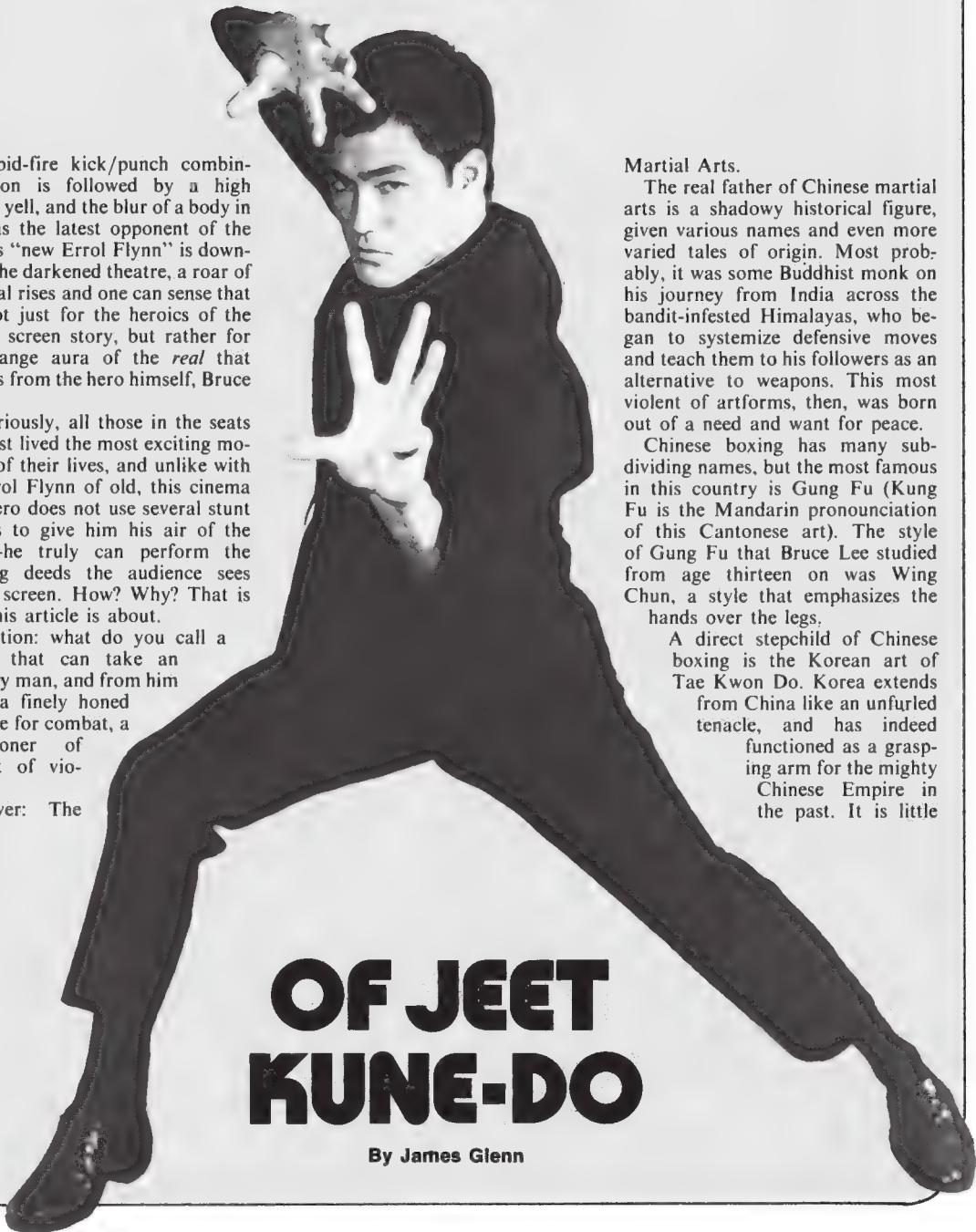
Answer: The

Martial Arts.

The real father of Chinese martial arts is a shadowy historical figure, given various names and even more varied tales of origin. Most probably, it was some Buddhist monk on his journey from India across the bandit-infested Himalayas, who began to systemize defensive moves and teach them to his followers as an alternative to weapons. This most violent of artforms, then, was born out of a need and want for peace.

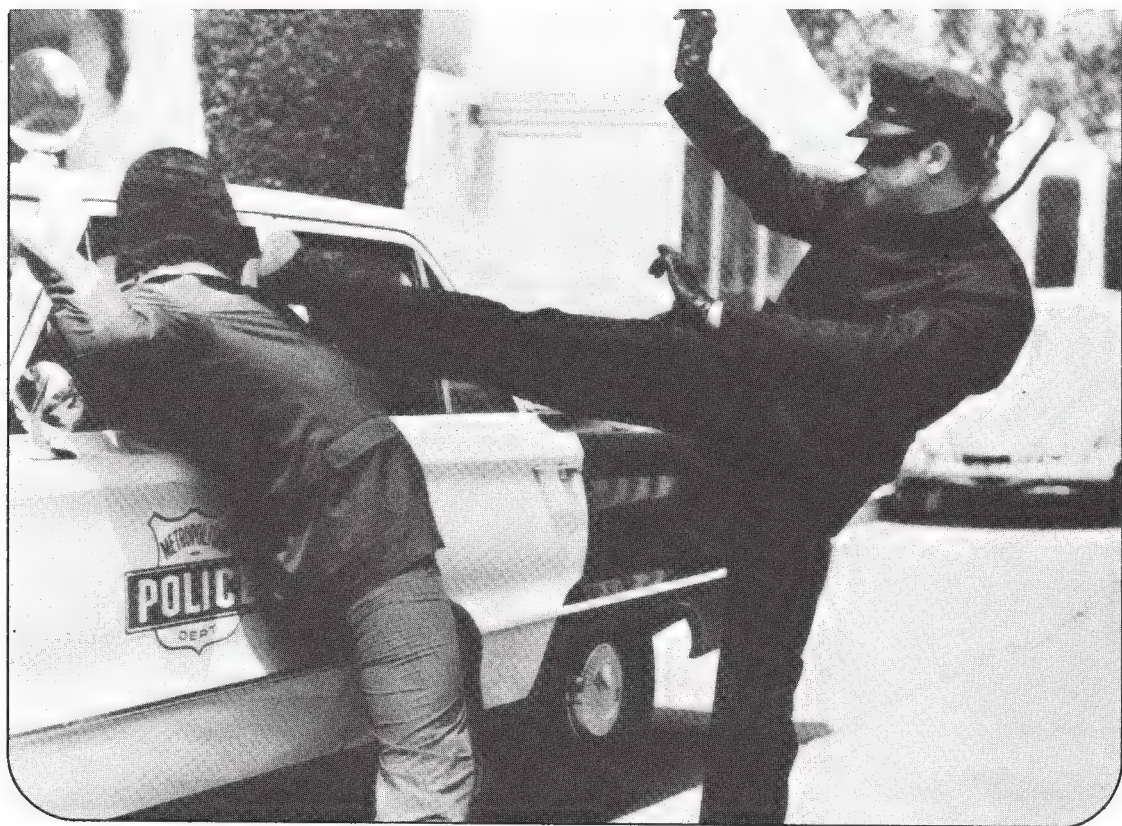
Chinese boxing has many subdividing names, but the most famous in this country is Gung Fu (Kung Fu is the Mandarin pronunciation of this Cantonese art). The style of Gung Fu that Bruce Lee studied from age thirteen on was Wing Chun, a style that emphasizes the hands over the legs.

A direct stepchild of Chinese boxing is the Korean art of Tae Kwon Do. Korea extends from China like an unfurled tenacle, and has indeed functioned as a grasping arm for the mighty Chinese Empire in the past. It is little



OF JEET KUNE-DO

By James Glenn



*Kato (Bruce Lee) kicked his way to American stardom, a path that began with his supporting role in *The Green Hornet* in the latter sixties.*

wonder, then, that the itinerate Buddhist monks that spread through China the varieties of Kung Fu and Tai Chi C'huan (a highly stylized, dance-like art popular throughout China as both self defense and an aid to health) should also spread their wisdom in the many territorial possessions of old China.

From the Asian mainland the arts moved out rapidly. Traveling west, the Thai adapted the arts into Kick Boxing and a dozen variations. Traveling east, the arts found their next students on the island of Okinawa. Okinawa was for some time under the vicious domination of ruthless warlords, who forbade the peasants to possess any form of weapon—from a dagger to a woodsman's axe. All the while, bandits and soldiers preyed on the helpless citizenry.

But the farmers were not helpless for long.

Secretly, they met patiently to practice with the only weapons left to them, farm tools and their bodies. From bodies no longer able to endure the humiliation of slavery they developed a deadly variety of Karate. From the simple farm tools such as grain threshers they developed a weapon that could exert eighteen hundred pounds of pressure per square inch (human bone breaks at from five to eight-and-a-half pounds), at speeds in excess of one hundred and twenty miles an hour: the Nunchaku.

It was a weapon that Bruce Lee took up, along with the triple irons, during the time he was the Green Hornet's side kick, because it would look flashy on screen. Personally, he did not use a weapon, because he believed all one needed was one's self in a fight.

In the mid-1800's a writer using the pen name of Shoto (pinetree) began to spread the word in Japan about a new fighting art—Shoto Kan Karate (Kan means way). This newest Japanese art was soon joined by another new sport—Judo. Both of these fighting styles had their partial ancestry in Jujitsu, which had for centuries been part of a Samurai warrior's training. It was a system of jabs, punches and body-throws designed to protect the Samurai who had temporarily lost or damaged his sword on the field of battle. The art of the Samurai is now gone, replaced by Kendo (dueling with wooden swords), but Karate and Judo are still strong today.

Even we Occidentals who have studied the arts find it difficult to appreciate the real beauty of them, at times, for while we westerners were developing our throwaway civilization and devising better ways to blow up our neighbors, the Oriental world was birthing systems that scientifically extended the capabilities of men and shaped their souls.

In anything systemized, there must be an element to extrapolate on; a kernel of truth around which dogma and ritual eventually accumulate. The Korean Karate style (Tae Kwon Do) concentrates on kicks, as does the Okinawan, while Shoto Kan Karate places strong emphasis on hand movements and blocking. Gung Fu uses forms imitative of animal movements.

All these great differences would seem to separate the arts by quite a gulf. Right? Wrong! For each art's differences, there are similarities not just in the actual movements or rituals that accompany them, but in the

painful similarity of mentalities. That is what prompted Bruce Lee to create the only nonClassical style of Gung Fu in existence.

Jeet Kune-Do.

In arts besides Jeet Kune-Do, a set series of exercises must be followed until the group becomes "memorized" by the body, and may therefore surface—when needed—from the subconscious. That is the common mistake of all these arts. Not allowing a total "emptiness" of the brain prevents the proper response to an aggressive act. Let me explain:

—If, in training you are taught to react to a sidekick, followed by a reverse punch in an endless series of drills, you will begin to feel that this is always the case. When in a real fight your opponent follows a sidekick with a back-hand blow, you will have a momentary hesitation, because you will have begun to counter a reverse punch. It could be a fatal hesitation. The example I give is highly simplified but illustrates my point. If you are drilled until your natural reactions are suppressed, you have forgotten why you studied a martial arts system—to win in a fight situation!

Jeet Kune-Do, literally translated, means: "The Way of the Stopping (or Intercepting) Fist." Simple enough. Hit him before he hits you. This is where the uniqueness of this form of Gung Fu comes into play. It is a technique of combat that has no answers. None. Bruce Lee once told a student: "A drill has to be functional. It has to be close to reality."

Which means one must expect everything in a fight and be ready for nothing. An old Chinese saying goes: "The usefulness of the cup is in its emptiness." You must be ready to counter only the moves made against you, never anticipate or second guess an opponent.

Lee stressed sparring (mock battles between students) in order to prepare them for the real thing. He also stressed a physical-fitness program that was very rigorous, himself running several miles a day and sticking to strict health-food diets. More important, though, he stressed knowledge—both inner and outer. To a student he said: "If it doesn't work for you, throw it away. But you should drill on it first. Know the rules, follow the rules, dissolve the rules." It was the way Lee lived his life.

And by the end he was making his own rules.

Lee had a large library of books on every fighting art that he knew existed, from boxing to fencing, Judo to Savate. He had no prejudice toward knowledge—no matter where it came from. "Just as nationalities have nothing to do with one's humanity, so they have nothing to do with the martial arts." If the answer were in Swahili



The Green Hornet, starring Van Williams (left) in the title role and Lee as Kato was—even before David Carradine—the American mass audience's first exposure to Chinese martial arts, at least as portrayed accurately.

or Greek, it was still the answer to Bruce Lee. Truth is universal and ultimate.

When asked about this multi-national sensitivity, he said: "You see, many people who come to instruction say 'Like man, like what is the truth? Hand it over to me.' So therefore one guy would say, 'I'll give you my Japanese way of doing it,' and another guy would say, 'I'll give you the Chinese way of doing it.' If you only have two hands and two legs, nationalities don't mean anything. We must approach it as an expression of one's self. When you go to a Japanese style, then you are expressing a Japanese style. You are not expressing yourself."

Lee decided with Jeet Kune Do to uncreate the martial arts; to return them to the stage when a punch was a punch and a kick a kick. In other words to be instinctive and do what is best for a situation, not best from a point of view of style. "Look at any tool as an art. Remember, for a single tool to be a masterpiece, it must have totality, speed, agility, power, flexibility and accuracy." Lee, who knew many different martial arts moves, was able to pick and choose mentally any move which suited a situation.

The Japanese have a word for such a turn of mind (for it is not a system—rather, it is a non-system). They call it Muga. Muga means that an individual develops a battle computer in his head; that he enables himself to cope with any fight situation unconsciously. Lee said, "Until you have the ability to move your body and adapt to whatever the object happens to be in front of you, as well as punch and kick from any angle, you still haven't gotten your total efficiency." And Sifu (master) Lee knew what he was talking about—he used to watch boxing matches on television and predict the moves of each fighter in advance, as well as point out the weaknesses and strengths of each. It seemed to be instinctual to him.

Lee, who majored in Oriental Philosophy at the University of Washington at Seattle, was a man who had matured along with his learning of martial arts. His reasons for first learning the arts show just how much, especially in light of his students' opinions of him.

Lee said: "I only took up Kung Fu when I began to feel insecure. I kept wondering what would happen to me if I met a rival gang when my gang was not around." That was Bruce Lee, the teenager.

But this was Bruce Lee, the man: "Thank God they (professional athletes) are gentle people!" James Franciscus said, "He (Bruce) had the capacity to kill you with one blow, but he was just the opposite kind of a fellow. Here was a man who was a walking machete and yet, as an individual, was as gentle, as tolerant and unassuming as I have ever known." And Bob Wall, a fellow martial artist/actor said: "... he was a tough man, he was a very, very sensitive one. Several situations showed that he didn't want to hurt anybody."

Jeet Kune Do, as Bruce Lee lived it, was an art that did what all true arts do . . . penetrated to the soul of the artist. Lee tried to keep his art pure and free from the classical hang-up of being systemized and ritualized after his death. When confronted with the possibility of opening a group of schools nationwide (Lee did have two small schools, or Kwoons) the Little Dragon once told Dan Inosanto, one of his instructors: "You could probably make some money out of it (opening a chain of schools), but I'd be very disappointed if you did." Yes, Lee would be very disappointed at the amount of exploitation and misrepresentation now associated with



But it was actually his role as the naive "country boy" in FISTS OF FURY that guaranteed both Bruce Lee and his unique Jeet Kune Do were on their way to stardom!

the arts he loved so well.

"It is an art, and like any art, the martial arts are ultimately self knowledge. A punch or kick is not to knock the hell out of the guy in front, but to knock the hell out of your ego, your fear, and your hang-ups. Once that is clear, then you can express yourself."

Yes, Master Lee, we see. Some of us.





THE WAY OF THE WEAPONS

By Thomas Sciacca

Bruce Lee—the name conjures up images of flying fists and bodies, of monumental battles and feats of derring-do. Bruce Lee, in his brief reign as superstar, gained a widespread number of devoted fans. One of those many things that tends to stick in certain people's minds is Lee's mastery of martial arts weapons.

Bruce Lee was first and foremost an expert in Chinese Boxing, known to most Occidentals as Kung-fu (or Gung-fu, as Lee, being Cantonese, called it). Although he was quite proficient in the use of weapons, he didn't like them except for sport. He began to use them in films only because they were flashy props. According to Lee's philosophy, the human body, properly trained, is the ultimate weapon. However, he himself did not arrive at this conclusion immediately.

Hong Kong in the early 1950s was the escape point for thousands of refugees leaving mainland China. It was an already overcrowded city, and the new citizens didn't help the situation. One often had to fight for space to live in some of the poorer areas, and this caused the formation of many street gangs, noted to be the toughest in the world. This is where Lee Jung Fan, known to us as Bruce Lee, grew into maturity.

Bruce once said, "I was a punk and went looking for fights. We used chains and pens with knives hidden inside. Then, one day, I wondered what would happen if I didn't have my gang behind me if I got into a fight. I

decided to learn how to protect myself and began to study gung-fu."

Lee eventually won the Intra-School Championship of Hong Kong and went to the United States to study philosophy.

Lee actually began the serious study of various weapons techniques just before he began his role as Kato on the "Green Hornet" series. On the ABC network show, Lee, as Kato, used the nunchaku, the three section staff, and darts, a variant on a Ninja weapon.

The nunchaku is obviously the most talked about of Lee's weapons. Certainly, it is the most visual of weapons, and undeniably the most deadly. When used by an expert, a nunchaku can travel at speeds of 100 miles per hour, and can generate pressure of 1600 pounds per square inch. A human bone can break at seven pounds of pressure, so you can imagine the amount of damage that can be done.



When Lee used the nunchaku, he had to be letter-perfect. He was a true perfectionist. During the filming of *ENTER THE DRAGON*, Lee practiced often ten hours a day with the nunchaku. Lesser men would have dropped from exhaustion, but after a day's work, Lee's body would be bruised from the battering of the nunchaku.

Originally developed on Okinawa, the nunchaku was used in the fields to beat grain, demolish structures (huts) and control herds of animals. During the 14th and 15th centuries, with weapons outlawed for whatever political motivations by the Warlords, people began to develop farm tools as weapons to protect them against marauding countryside bandits. Eventually, the nunchaku became a main Okinawan defense weapon.

The design of the nunchaku is quite simple, yet if used correctly, it can be a formidable weapon. The basic design is that of two round or hexagonal rods of wood or pipe, connected by a length of chain, cord or leather. The nunchaku is a versatile device for it can be used to flail or strangle a victim.

When the two sticks are wrapped around a victim's neck, there is enough leverage that a person could actually snap the bone.

The nunchaku is not a weapon one can master right away. Even Bruce Lee did not master them overnight, so, when the typical fellow who tries to do a stunt with his nunchaku, without proper training, will probably break his own head rather than someone else's.

Those who would like to use the nunchaku should be warned; it is not a toy, in fact possession of a nunchaku

in California and Illinois is a felony; in many other states there are statutes outlawing possession except for practitioners of The Martial Arts.

Bruce Lee used another sectioned weapon similar to the nunchaku; in fact it was its direct ancestor. The three-sectioned staff was originally used by the Shaolin monks of Ancient China, nearly a thousand years ago. Originally a field tool, as was the nunchaku, the three-section-staff was used in the monasteries for practice, exercise, and eventually as a weapon. The common people also used it to protect them from roving bandits. It is still used today in Modern China for exercise purposes.

Lee used a variety of Oriental weapons, often combining fighting styles used for several different weapons. This eclectic use of different styles was the essence of Lee's martial art, "Jeet-Kune-Do." Lee believed that just learning one way of fighting made you vulnerable to someone who knew more than you. For instance: if you knew only one kind of kick, it would be difficult to block and attack someone who knew more than one technique. Your opponent's skill in different techniques would best you.

An example of Lee's style was when he used the Bo with the techniques of the jodo stick.

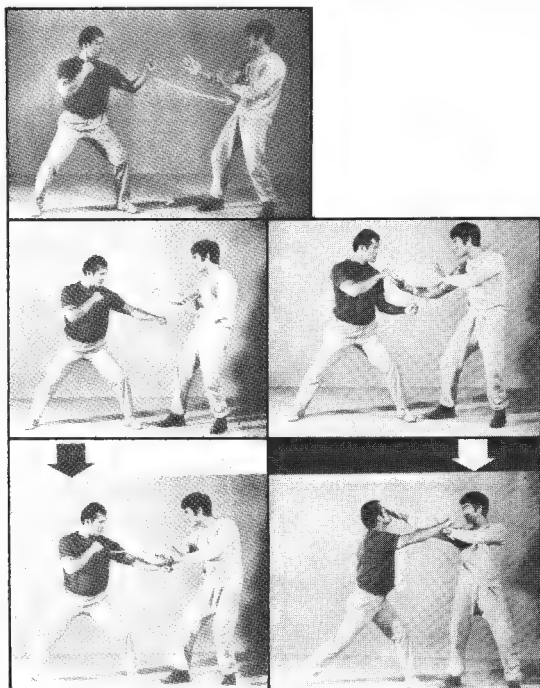
The Bo is actually a shepherd's walking stick. A variety of similar techniques were used in Africa, China, Korea and England, but we shall concentrate on the Korean technique. As with many oriental weapons, the Bo was a field tool adapted as a weapon. In the years after the Manchurian Warlords took possession of Korea, the poor farmers had to develop their tools into weapons, since what they had as weapons were taken away from them. Consequently, the Bo developed into a hitting, offensive weapon.

The Jodo stick is a difficult weapon to date because of its simplicity and universal availability. Weapons like the Jodo stick have been in use since the days of the caveman, so it is virtually impossible to trace it.

In Japanese, "Jodo" means "Way of the Stick," "Jo" meaning stick, "Do" meaning way. Depending on the way it is held, the Jodo stick can be used on the side of the neck, throat, or bridge of the nose.

Lee used both styles in conjunction when he filmed *RETURN OF THE DRAGON* and *ENTER THE DRAGON*. In *RETURN*, Lee used a staff against the Mafia soldiers who tried to kill him. This scene is a good example of how Lee used different techniques. He does it so well, and with such speed and accuracy that it is often difficult to follow his moves. The "Green Hornet" television series saw Lee use different techniques in one episode, titled "*The Preying Mantis*," which co-starred Mako as the evil leader of the Tong, a group of Chinatown citizens that had been persuaded by Mako to carry out his plans of terror and extortion. Bruce Lee, as Kato, wants revenge because Mako and his gang broke up the restaurant of Kato's girlfriend, and in addition, ambushed Kato and threw him in a trash can! The final battle takes place in a buddist temple, where Kato confronts the entire Tong. Kato takes on the Tongs, using his darts, which Mako deflects by use of a metal hand fan (an ancient Gung-Fu weapon). Some of the members of the Tong try to use a three section staff on Kato, but he takes it from them and dispatches his foes... A tong member comes behind him with a bo, but Kato uses that against him with quick blows to the neck





and chest. Meanwhile The Green Hornet is dispatching several of the Tong members. He uses some Gung-Fu, and Bo techniques with his Hornet-sting. (If the hornet-sting is the delicate piece of equipment I think it is, why was the Hornet bumping it around so? Oh well, you can't have perfection). Kato then goes into his mantis stance. Mako is the only one left who is willing, or able to fight. There are punches thrown, blocks made, but finally Kato comes in close and lands many punches to Mako's mid-section. Mako stands motionless for a second, and then falls... dead. The terror of the Tong is ended.

In this episode, Lee co-ordinated all the fights, and deliberately made them realistic. No fifty kidney punches and still standing here. The fights were good, and fast. Compare that fight with the one in "Enter the Dragon," when Lee penetrates Han's underground fortress. The fight Lee has is with sticks and clubs. It is a pretty good one, by my standards, because Lee fends off about a dozen attackers, all unarmed, and Lee *does not* escape, but is eventually captured.

A weapon that has varied origins, and was to be used by Lee in a future film project was the sai. The sai supposedly has its origins in Indonesia, but this is not confirmed. Basically, it was a farmer's tool for making burrows in the ground or planting of grain, but over the years, it developed into a most versatile weapon. It can be used for blocking—whether it be a fist, stick, or nunchaku—and for slashing, hurling or hooking objects.

(Continued on page 62)



THE WAY OF THE WEAPONS

(Continued from page 38)

In Japan it was developed by ancient police for catching sword blades. Bruce Lee used a sai, or a variation of it in "Fists of Fury," in his battle royale against a drug pusher.

As Kato, Bruce Lee used an interesting weapon... the Hornet dart. Actually, the techniques he used were derived from the Japanese Ninja. Ninja comes from the word "Ninjitsu" meaning, "The art of stealth." Ninjas were masterminds of espionage, sabotage, arson, and assassination. In addition they had to be their own doctors, made their own poisons and cures and were



masters of disguise. A Ninja was so thoroughly trained in fighting that he was expected to predict the outcome of a fight!

Ninjitsu started on the Japanese island of Honshu around the 13th century, although many of their techniques were developed centuries before. The Ninja way of life was truly Spartan. They started very young, and by the time they were 11 or 12 they were considered full-fledged Ninjas. Girls were also trained to be female ninjas, called kunoichi. The typical Ninja garb was designed for night fighting, the entire outfit being black, including a mask, and chain-mail for protection of the chest. The Spartan-like training made the ninja a master of different forms of fighting, including kenjitsu (sword-manship), kyujitsu (skill with bow and arrow), yarijitsu (spear) bojitsu (stick) iaijitsu (fast sword draw) kusarigama (chain and scythe) and kumi-uchi (unarmed combat). The Ninja had other weapons in his bag of

tricks, including a poison water-gun, smoke bombs, eye-blinding powders, acid spurting tubes, to name a few. The ninja also carried a pouch with him, and in it he would carry a now famous weapon, the Shuriken, a weapon everyone remembers from "You Only Live Twice." Collectively known as tonki, these throwing knives were often coated with a poison to quicken an enemy's death.

Bruce Lee used another type of ninja weapon, the dart. Used in the same manner as the Shuriken, the darts were held in the palm of the hand and thrown sidearm, underhand, and overhand. They were often thrown at pursuers, and attackers. Along with the darts, the ninja would also strew a handful of multi-pointed tetsu-bishi, or caltrops. These would have points sticking straight up, stopping anyone pursuing who happened to have these things get in their paths.

The ninjas were quite effective secret agents. Often, they would go into an enemy camp and cause trouble. It would not be very difficult because they would be dressed as a peasant, priest, or soldier. The Ninja would learn the dialect and customs of the area he was infiltrating, much as modern spies do today.

It is possible Lee became interested in Ninjas several years ago, when many films and television series about ninjas were highlighted in the orient. A ninja "fever" took Japan by storm several years ago and several street gangs even employed some of their techniques, though not very well, for they were caught by the local police.

Weapons were not part of Bruce Lee's philosophy. The Martial arts were his life and weapons had no part of it. The human body was *it*, the ultimate weapon. A properly trained body could do anything within the realm of physical law.

Perhaps his philosophy stems from the experiences he had as a youth, the chains and knives being psychological crutches for his friends. His own theories on fighting were proved out when he was attacked by several men in Hong Kong years ago. He was not armed—they were. Although he himself was hospitalized, so were several of the men. The rest fled. His training and hard work had paid off.

Many years later, when he had a big reputation, youths would challenge him. Sometimes, he would knock them down with one shot, and then give them instructions on what they did wrong. But most of the time, he would rather not fight, preferring the insult to hurting someone severely.

Lee's fantastic abilities and mind-boggling actions were a culmination of twenty years of hard and dedicated work. Unfortunately, many fans think that they can learn gung-fu and weaponry overnight, perhaps becoming the new Bruce Lee. This attitude is quite counter to the ideas and philosophies of Lee and the martial arts masters.

Lee's belief was this; if you want to learn the martial arts, you must be like an empty cup; a cup that is filled with water cannot take anymore, it will overflow. The mind of a student is the same.

A young person who has pre-determined notions about gung-fu or karate will never become a true master because the heart, and more important, the *soul* will not truly be involved. One who learns the martial arts to show off to his peers will never become a true master.

Anyone who admires Bruce Lee and wished to emulate him, yet acts counter to his thoughts, does not do true service to his spirit and memory.



SPIRALLING STRANDS OF SMOKING SANDAL-WOOD TWIST THROUGH THE DARKENED ROOM...

...TENDRILS OF SWEET-SMELLING INCENSE REMOVING THE MAN KNOWN AS LIN SUN FURTHER FROM THE REALMS OF ILLUSION THAT THE REST OF THE WORLD SEES AS REALITY.

...UNTIL THE HOURS SPENT IN MEDITATION...

...HEIGHTENED BY A LONG PERIOD WITHOUT FOOD OR DRINK...

...COUPLE WITH THE PULSATIONS EMANATING FROM THE TIGER AMULET WORN ABOUT LIN SUN'S NECK, A GIFT FROM HIS PAST-MASTER, AND ONLY ONE OF THREE...THE OTHERS BELONGING TO HIS TIGER-BROTHER'S, ABE BROWN AND BOB DIAMOND.

THE TENDRILS SWIRL, DISSIPATE AND SWIRL AGAIN TO FORM, BEHIND THE MEDITATING TIGER-SON...

COME, LIN SUN! CHAOS THREATENS, AND YOU ARE NEEDED!

...THE REALITY OF A MAN IN THE SMOKE! AND, AS THE MAN SPEAKS WORDS THAT FALL UPON LIN SUN'S MIND RATHER THAN HIS EARS... WE SET OUT UPON ONE OF THE STRANGEST ADVENTURES EVER TO BEFALL ONE OF THE...

SONS OF THE
TIGER

THE MAN OF SMOKE SPEAKS AGAIN...

YOU ARE
NEEDED,
WARRIOR!

AND YOUR MIND
CRIES OUT TO ME
THROUGH THE VEILS
OF ILLUSION
THAT YOU WILL
ANSWER WHEN
CALLED!

I WILL
ANSWER!

AS I KNEW
YOU WOULD!

RISE, THEN,
WARRIOR!
AT THE TOUCH
OF MY HAND--

--RISE!!

THE TIGER-AMULET GLOWS...
AND THE LIFE-FORCE OF THE
BEING THAT IS LIN SUN SEPA-
RATES FROM THE PHYSICAL
ASPECT OF HIS SELF...

AGAIN I WALK
OTHER PLANES OF
BEING!*

SONGS WILL BE
SUNG IN HEAVEN
OF YOUR VOYAGINGS,
WARRIOR!

BUT, COME!--
WE MUST FOLLOW
THE BECKONING
SMOKE!

* FOR THE TIGER'S
FIRST ASTRAL-JOURNEY,
KUNG FU #10 AND
#11 -- ARCHIE.

LIN SUN'S ASTRAL-
SELF FOLLOWS THE
WARRIOR THROUGH
THE DOOR OF THE TIGER-
SON'S APARTMENT ON
CENTRAL PARK WEST...

...BUT ONCE THROUGH
THE DOOR, THE SIGHT THAT
GREETES HIS EYES IS MOST
DEFINITELY NOT THAT OF
WEST 86TH STREET...

WELCOME TO ONE OF THE
MANY ASPECTS OF HEAVEN,
LIN SUN!-- BUT I FEAR YOUR
WELCOME WILL NOT BE A
PLEASANT ONE-- FOR THERE
IS DEATH THIS DAY IN--

THE VALLEY OF

ANCESTORS

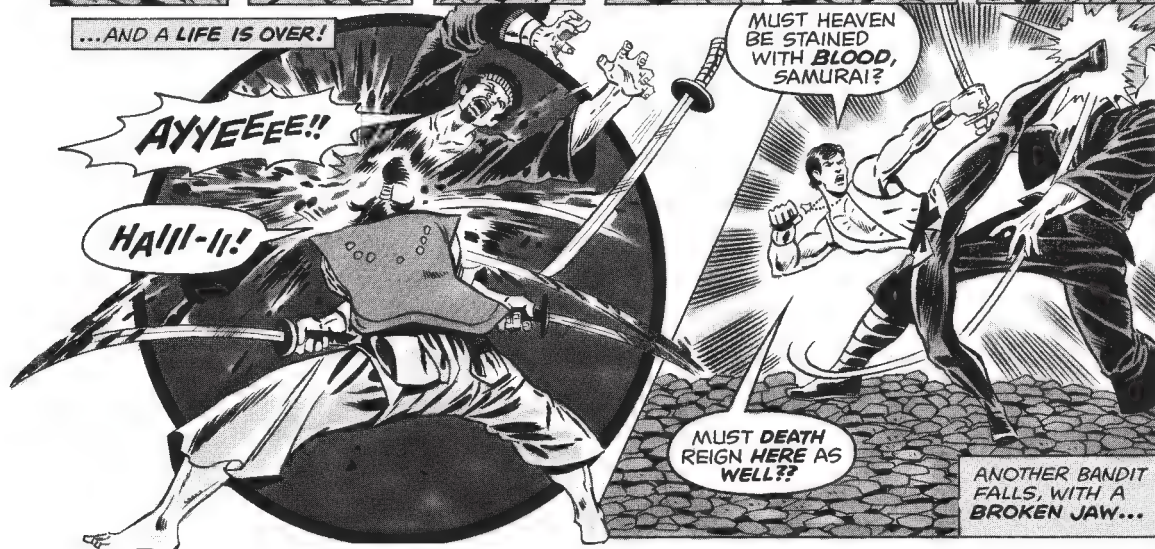
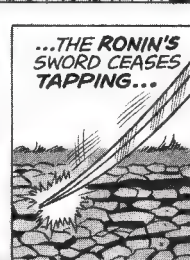
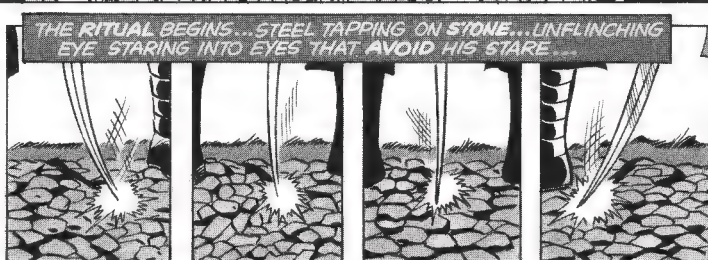
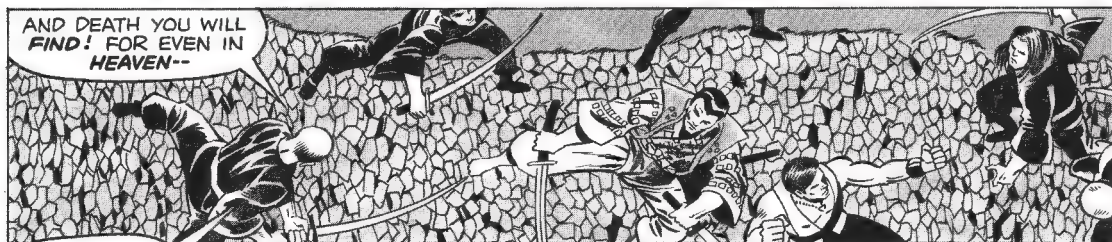
LIN SUN GASPS
AS THE BEAUTY
OF HEAVEN OVER-
WHELMS HIM...

...BUT THE HAND OF
THE SAMURAI AT HIS
SIDE MERELY TIGHTENS
ABOUT THE HILT OF
HIS LONG-SWORD!

AN UGETSU TALE... RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED, IN
PEACE, TO AKIRA KUROSAWA









WHAP!

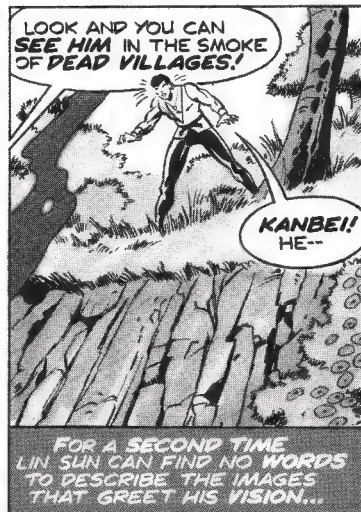
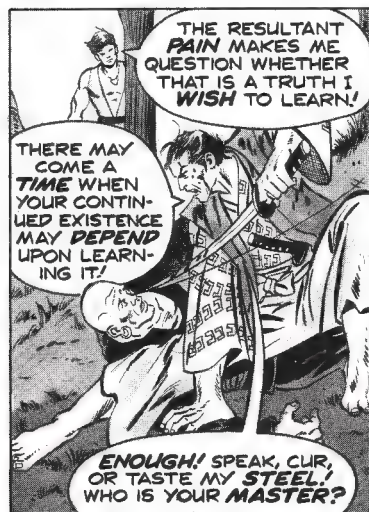
MUST EVEN HEAVEN
TAKE ON THE
ASPECTS OF HELL?

WOK!

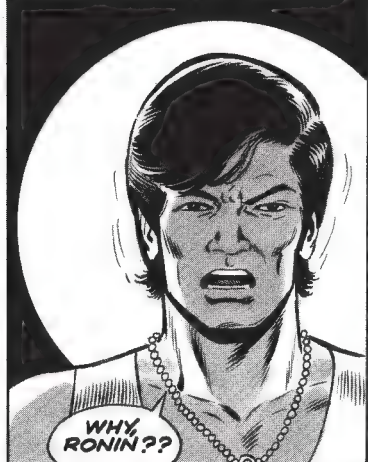
CHAT!

AYYEEEE!

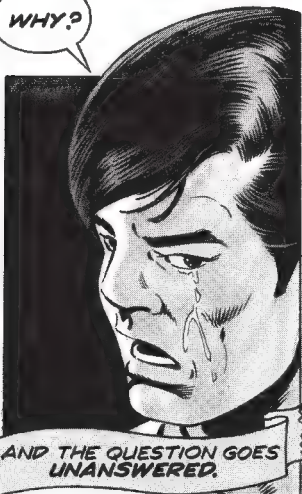
THESE QUESTIONS
YOU SPEAK ARE CON-
CEPTS FORMED BY
MAN, LIN SUN-- AND
IT IS MAN WHO HAS
INTRODUCED THE
IDEA OF DEATH
INTO THE VALLEY
OF PEACE!



...AND HE IS MADE TO UNDER-
STAND THE WAYS OF DEATH!

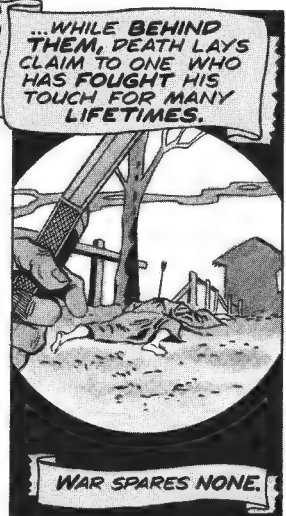
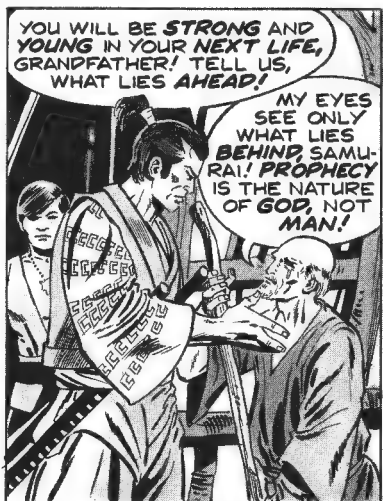


WHY?



HAUGHTY HAND-
MAIDEN OF GOD--







NONE!

SHIRO!
THE HEAD-
MAN OF THE
VILLAGE!

ABOVE HIM
FLAPS THE REM-
NANTS OF THE
WHITE BANNER
OF GOD, THE
FLAG OF
PEACE!

THE SYM-
BOLS OF ORDER!
EVEN THE SMALLEST
FOOT-SOLDIER OF
DEATH WOULD HAVE
SEEN THESE THINGS
AS A THREAT!



SWISH!

FLAK!

THE MAN
IS BEYOND
SALVATION--

--AND
GOD NEEDS
NO HELP
FROM US!

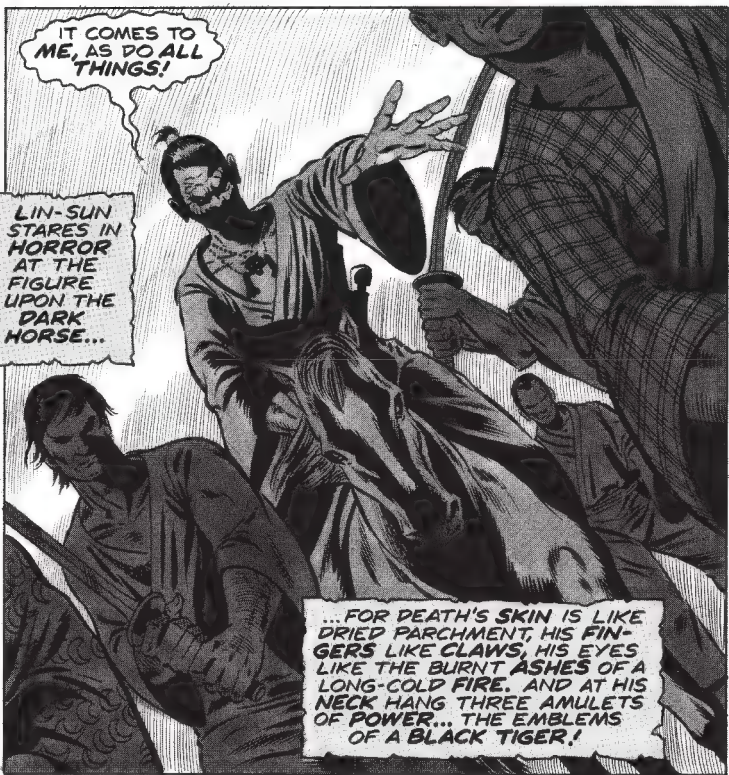


BUT THE
BANNER CANNOT
CARRY ITSELF!

IT
GOES
WITH
US!



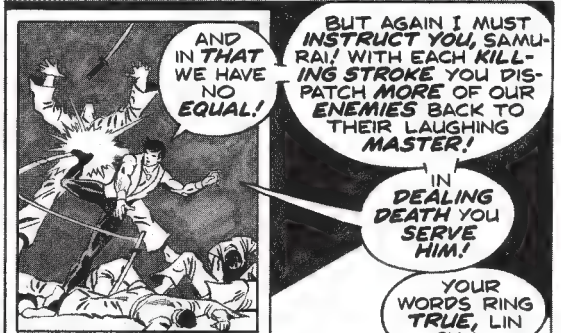
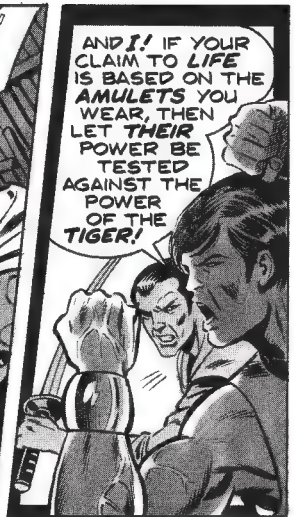
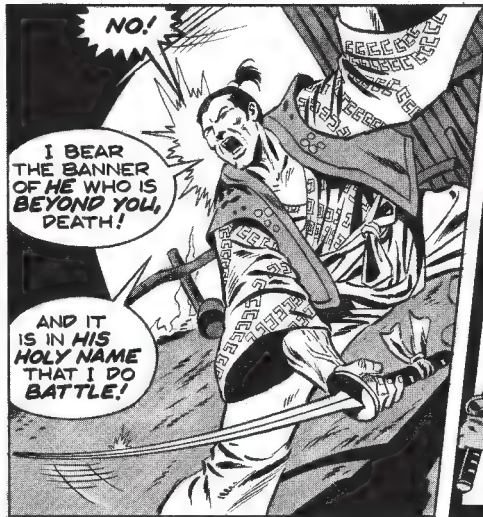
TO
DEATH,
RONIN!



IT COMES TO
ME, AS DO ALL
THINGS!

LIN-SUN
STARES IN
HORROR
AT THE
FIGURE
UPON THE
DARK
HORSE...

... FOR DEATH'S SKIN IS LIKE
DRIED PARCHMENT, HIS FING-
ERS LIKE CLAWS, HIS EYES
LIKE THE BURNT ASHES OF A
LONG-COLD FIRE. AND AT HIS
NECK HANG THREE AMULETS
OF POWER... THE EMBLEMS
OF A BLACK TIGER!





AND IN **THAT**
YOU WILL FIND
YOUR **RUIN**,
SAMURAI!



IN **DEFYING** ME, YOU
SERVE ME! DO YOU UNDER-
STAND **NOW** THE WAY OF
MY **POWER**, KANBEI
KIKUCHIYO?

MY HAND
DEALS OUT THE
FIRES OF HELL,
RONIN!

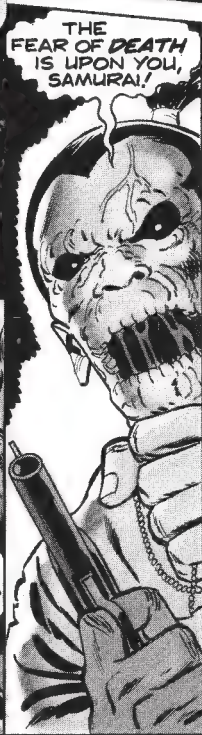


**TASTE THE
DARK SIDE
OF LIFE!**



DO YOU NOT KNOW
FEAR, RONIN? FEAR IS
ANOTHER NAME MEN
KNOW ME BY!

COLD! MY BLADE IS
GRIPPED IN AN **ICY**
DREAD THAT PIERCES
ME TO THE **HEART!**



THE
FEAR OF **DEATH**
IS UPON YOU,
SAMURAI!

WHAT
DEMON IS
THIS THAT
SLAYERS FOR
MY **SOUL**?



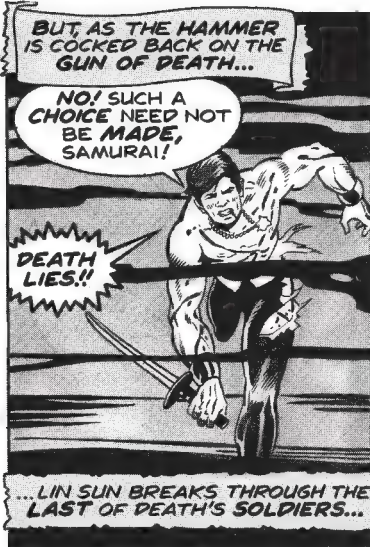
BUT I
WILL OFFER YOU
A **CHOICE!** HOW
WILL YOU **CHOOSE**
TO **DIE**, KANBEI
KIKUCHIYO?

BY
DEATH'S
BULLET--?

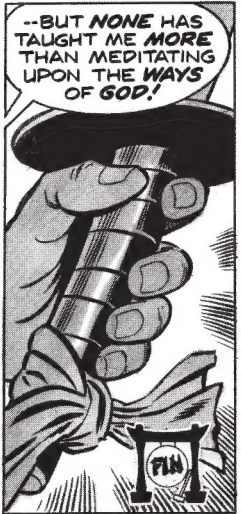
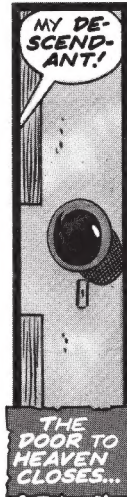


--OR BY YOUR **OWN**
HAND? YOUR **BLADE**
IN THE SERVICE OF
DEATH?

IN THE
NAME OF
GOD, I WILL
NOT **SERVE**
YOU!







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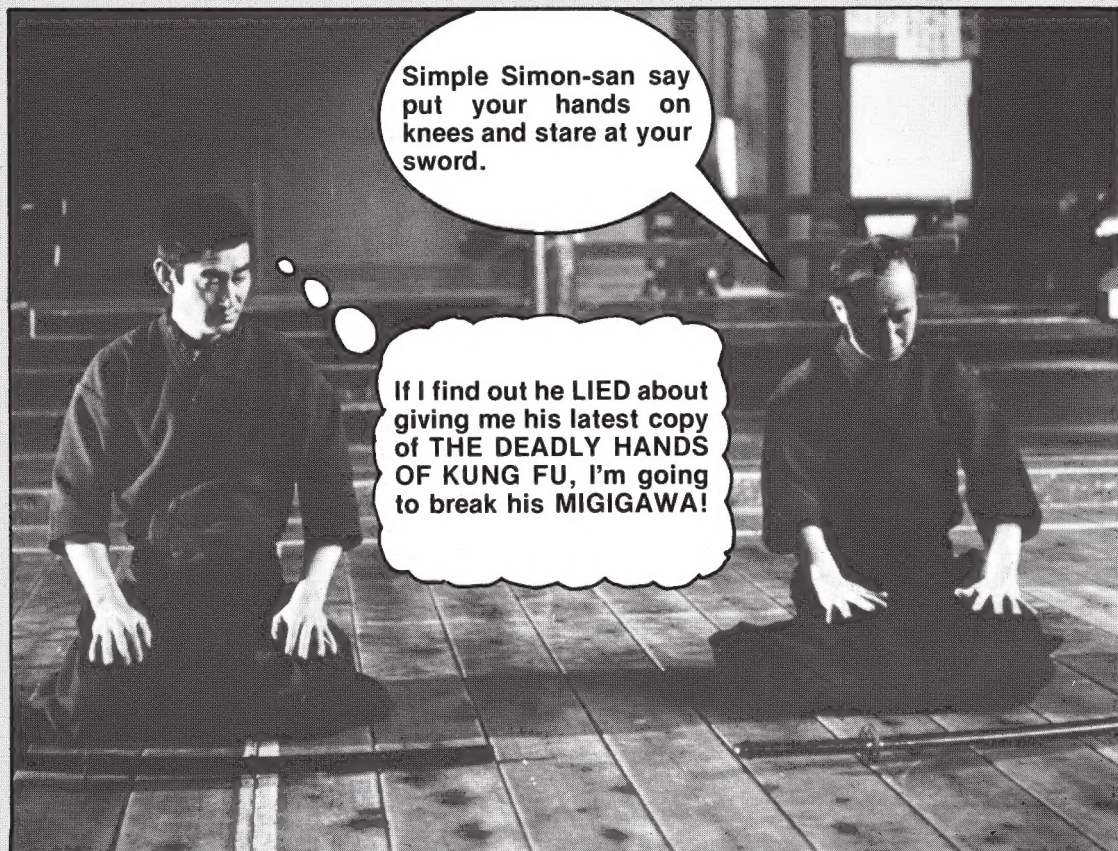
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